AMMAN PREPARES A SPECIAL WELCOME

Mohammad Subeihi, the Director of the Department of Public Libraries in Greater Amman, is planning a stimulating programme for INTAMEL’s first visit to Jordan (and to the Middle East). Following a VIP reception to launch the conference, which will be based in the Al-Hussein Cultural Centre, the first four days will be devoted to the professional programme and INTAMEL sessions.

While at this stage details are provisional, the programme will focus on a range of library services in Jordan, with papers covering public and school libraries, IT community centres, university and national libraries, and the Jordan Libraries Association. Library visits are being arranged, including to Jordan University Library and the Abdul Hameed Foundation Public Library.

In line with recent conference practice, time has been allocated for papers by INTAMEL members, addressing current concerns or sharing experience potentially of wider application. Such sessions are now an integral part of the INTAMEL conferences, enhancing and complementing the focus on the host library. Mohammad asks members intending to give papers to contact him as soon as possible in order to facilitate scheduling of and arrangements for the session(s). It is intended that the papers, or a résumé of them, will be mounted on INTAMEL’s web pages on IFLANET.

An accompanying cultural programme gives members the opportunity to explore Jordan’s historical and cultural heritage, with visits to sites in the North of the country and a trip south to Aqaba on the Red Sea for an overnight stay prior to visiting Petra, Jordan’s most famous historical site of all.

Monday 24 to Sunday 30 September 2001
INTAMEL Conference
Amman, Jordan

Enquiries to:
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Outline Provisional Conference Programme

Monday 24 September
• Opening Ceremony and Welcoming Reception
• Public Libraries in Jordan, School Libraries in Jordan
• Sight-seeing tour in Amman
• Official dinner

Tuesday 25 September
• Jordan Libraries Association
• National Library
• Abdul Hameed Foundation Public Library visit

Wednesday 26 September
• Jordan Universities
• Jordan IT Community Centres
• Jordan University Library visit

Thursday 27 September
• INTAMEL Business Meeting

Friday 28 September
• Trip to Jerash Roman city and Irbid, to visit Al-Yarmouk University and Umm Qais antiquities city

Saturday 29 September
• Trip to Aqaba (overnight stay)

Sunday 30 September
• Visit to Petra, return to Amman

The Al-Hussein Cultural Centre – venue for the 2001 Conference

The entrance to Amman Central Library (left) and young readers in the Central Children’s Library
ZARAGOZA STORY

The Municipal Library Service of Zaragoza is INTAMEL’s newest member. Its Co-ordinator, Pilar Bes, introduces a service which makes wide use of shared premises, and outlines its aims.

- become a meeting point, where people can communicate and debate, and which provides general, practical and communal information and also delivers information from local organisations. This role is easier to develop because of the location in common buildings with other social and cultural services.
- offer opportunities for personal growth and lifelong learning:
  - promote and develop skills in information retrieval;
  - work in partnership with learning institutions to develop and improve learning opportunities;
- provide a user-focused service:
  - promote the widest possible awareness of the Library Service, resources, facilities and activities;
- extend accessibility to Library services –
  - increase the number of branches
  - extend the opening hours (including, in some periods, small hours for students)
- extend the opening hours, increase the number of branches, and make possible reservations online and interlibrary loans.
- promote library brand: what does it look like?
- promote the widest possible awareness of the Library Service, resources, facilities and activities;
- extend accessibility to Library services –
  - increase the number of branches
  - extend the opening hours (including, in some periods, small hours for students)
- offer temporary services in special places (lending services in sports facilities, such as swimming pools in summer);
- improve the accessibility of collections –
  - maintain the union catalogue online and make it accessible from all branches
  - make possible reservations online
  - provide interlibrary loans;
- do users’ needs studies and surveys;
- introduce quality management systems.

STOCKHOLM PREVIEW

Ingé Lundén, Director of Stockholm City Library, looks forward to meeting INTAMEL colleagues in Amman, to discuss the 2002 Conference in Stockholm. Here she shares some preliminary thoughts. She hopes that the week of 9 to 13 September 2002 might be a suitable date. “Stockholm will be at her best at this time,” she writes, “inviting you all to her blue and green beauty”. It will still be warm enough to enjoy the archipelago and the city’s many large parks.

INTLIB – INTAMEL’S LISTSERV

INTLIB is provided by IFLA as part of its IFLANET service.
- To join INTLIB, contact list owner/moderator Stuart Brewer, Information Co-ordinator. Tel: +44 (0) 191 281 3502 stuart@wressell.demon.co.uk
- To post messages on INTLIB, send to: intlib@infoserv.nlc-bnc.ca

The Biblioteca Publica Ricardo Magdalena in Zaragoza
difficult circumstances during the
construction have tried the
patience of both readers and
librarians.

The library remained open till June
15th 2000 and readers appreciated
our efforts to maintain ‘business as
usual’, understanding that we were
trying to work in their interests. In
retrospect this decision, which
initially provoked much debate,
was a reader-friendly one. I would
like to thank both readers and
librarians for their patience, and
our library network for undertaking
the tasks, services and help for
readers during the five-month

The new library opened its doors
on November 20th. We were all
excited, tense and anxious – there
was a lot at stake. Everything was
new: the building, the service
system, the database, and many of
the staff. Librarians and readers
are all learning to use it.

It’s impressive how quickly visitors
have made themselves at home in
the browser room and the reading
rooms; how quickly they have
discovered the new facilities
provided by the computers, almost
200 of which are now available.
And our new services are attracting
new readers. Statistical data for the
first week show that the new
opening hours (Mon to Fri: 10 am–
8 pm; Sat: 10 am-4 pm) are also
appreciated.

Visitors are obviously happy: the
spaces are well arranged and small
modifications during the furnishing
created an even more comfortable
and friendly ambience. Of course,
we are still paying close attention
to what might be changed in the
short or long run. Probably by fall
2001, the reconstruction of the
Wenckheim Palace will be
complete and the library will be
available for the public in its

It is good news that the
Municipality has raised our
subsidy this year and accepted our
financial claim to raise the funds
for staffing. These steps have
contributed considerably to our
ability to re-open the library.

The almost 100-year-old debate on
where to build the capital’s central
library has been resolved. We can
now focus on making it work in a
reliable and reader-friendly way,
and on improving facilities to serve
readers more effectively. At the
same time we are beginning to
renew and develop our network,
preserving and even improving
everything that is worthwhile. This
is the task now before us.

A welcoming and spacious area.

The inaugural ceremony marked
the end of an era and the beginning
of a new in the history of the
library. It is quite different from the
old one. The architects and
designers had an up-to-date,
reader-friendly, modern public
library in mind when they drew up
the plans, defined the size, and
designed the rooms and services.

No one would say that the past two
years have been easy. Construction
work began in 1998 and since
then, despite numerous problems
and difficulties, we have been
serving our readers in the historic
Wenckheim Palace building. The

Dr. Peter Fodor, General-
Director of the Ervin Szabó
Metropolitan Library in
Budapest, reports on the
Central Library’s new block
which was given a high-
profile launch in November.

- fodorp@fszek.hu
- www.fszek.hu

Monsters lair at the heart of Budapest Central Library – with the new block on the left.

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PIONEERING THE HYBRID LIBRARY

Maija Berndtson, Director of Helsinki City Library, which recently joined INTAMEL, introduces a library service famous for its pursuit of cutting edge innovation to achieve long-established goals.

- maija.berndtson@lib.hel.fi
- www.lib.hel.fi/english/

At an iGS (information Gas Station) in Helsinki

Our goal from the very beginning has been that the IT services offered to Helsinki citizens are equally accessible and of high quality throughout the library system. Every branch provides Internet access for customers, free of charge. The total number of workstations is currently over 200.

information Gas Station – a modern way to serve the customers

The idea for a new service system, iGS, was born in the Cable Book Library in spring 2000. The information service station is new both as regards the appearance and the service principle. The idea for the iGS came from a gas station. It serves customers either on the spot, by phone, by fax or even via text messages (SMS). It consists of two elements: at the Service Station customers get individual supervision and instructions but they can also seek information on their own at an Information Pump, i.e. a separate workstation iGS which was installed with the money Helsinki City Library received from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000. This first annual Access to Learning Award, 1 million dollars, was awarded to Helsinki City Library for its outstanding practices in increasing access for all people to computers and the Internet.<http://igs.kirjastot.fi>

Something old – something new

iGS is an excellent example of the Helsinki City Library’s aim which is to combine old and well proven methods with new, innovative ones. The goal is a hybrid library which can meet customers’ varying needs in a multifaceted way.

UTRECHT TO UK

A stimulating range of library services and programmes in the North East of England have recently been visited by a group from the Utrecht Public Library. Led by Director Ton van Vlimmeren, the group aimed to learn at first hand about the role of metropolitan libraries in lifelong learning, social inclusion, regeneration and in the provision of information services, and about the opportunities for co-operation with the education sector (schools, colleges and universities), for learning partnerships, and for collaboration with other organisations.

During the two-day study tour, Ton and colleagues Ada Velthoven, Hetty Staatsen and Herman Scheffer, visited libraries and met key staff in four of the neighbouring Boroughs: North Tyneside, Sunderland, Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead, which, together with South Tyneside, serve a conurbations of 1 million people. Highlights of the tour included integrated services to children and schools, expanding ICT facilities and training for the public, website publishing, in-depth

Helsinki City Library in a nutshell

- Public access points: the main library and 36 branch libraries, two mobile libraries (43 stops), 18 libraries in institutions and two other service points, plus a home delivery service.
- Online services can be found at <www.lib.hel.fi/english>.
- Collection: 2.0 million
- Total borrowings: 9.1 million
- Visits: 7.1 million
- Virtual visits: 15 million
- Operating expenses: FIM 154.9 million (USD 23.7 m); personnel 500

Figures relate to 2000.